

A few reminders for overall best practices in EE

Before Your Workshop:

- **Plan with Co-instructors** —set ground rules, i.e. 60 second personal stories are the max-and only if they are relevant.
- **Reserve a site**, make sure it is well marked, share map/directions and
- **Safety first**-know your outdoor area-poison ivy, traffic, weather, length of program, accessibility issues...Fear of the outdoors is often the biggest hurdle in engaging an audience—dispel the fear by showing a safe and fun time—do not make fun of or patronize the fear.
- **Seed outdoor sites** with pictures of birds/plants if it's not likely you'll see them. A scavenger hunt for items is nearly as cool as seeing the real thing...just put them in spots they'd occur in nature, i.e. tracks in sand, a woodpecker up a tree trunk, a stuffed opossum on a branch etc., a duck in a stream (decoys are great!).

To Kick Things Off:

- **Always introduce yourself** and a few credentials. The audience wants to believe in you and your expertise.
- **If something comes up** — doors are locked, helper doesn't show, it's raining, you have a "DNR hater" come to class - relax and solve the problem quickly — without showing your worry to the audience.
- **Don't apologize** or bring your drama into the classroom, i.e. sorry I'm late but my kids...blah, blah — if you step on someone's foot than sorry is OK☺.
- **Be prepared**, if you're going outside, with bug spray, sunscreen, umbrellas etc. If the audience/class is comfortable they will listen. Note on your marketing that a portion of class will be outside and that comfortable footwear and clothing is necessary-be specific—boots-gloves-hat-sunglasses, sunscreen, a snack.
- **Tell children**, "Ask me a question anytime — a question begins with Who, What, Where, When, Why or How — if you would like to tell me a cool story, come chat with me after the program, I'd love to hear it☺."

Helpful Tid Bits

- **10 minutes**-the magic time you have to engage an audience, and the most that should be spent hitting just one learning style
- **SHARE**, ask the audience for ideas and thoughts when appropriate — know how to bring their attention back to your objectives.
- **"I don't know, let's find out"** is an opportunity - never waffle or guess at an answer.
- **Breaks** should be at regular intervals, make sure they know where restrooms/drinking fountains are.
- **Watch the audience's** body language — if they are having a lot of side conversations they are bored —you must re-engage them. Adapt program/agenda quickly.
- **Know your objectives**, and stick to meeting them — but grasp teachable moments when they appear (like a hawk swooping down near the class).
- Remember how to **dispel meeting monsters** - they can frustrate the rest of the class very quickly.
- **Put your eyes to the sun**, so the audience isn't squinting. When speaking to a group or line of people, speak from the center of that group, so all can see and hear you. Go only as fast as the slowest.
- **Do not turn your back** to the audience for more than a second --- and don't speak when your back is to them - -- it's hard for some to hear without seeing lips.
- **Speak with enthusiasm**, loud enough so they can hear — or get a mic, and not in a monotone.
- **Speak to different learning styles** — mainly make sure to include a physical or hands-on component, art, music/sounds, a quiet reading/imagining/writing portion, group work/solitary work, lecture/discussion. A mix so each preference is hit---so every participant has a chance to excel/succeed. You are building on different intelligences.
- **Remember to have fun, if you do, they will!**